

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An apparatus disposed adjacent to a main transfer mechanism for processing a substrate one by one, comprising:

a heating process chamber in which a heating process is performed one by one for the substrate;

a load lock chamber, integrally connected to the heating process chamber in a predetermined direction, having an opening closable with a shutter allowing the substrate to be transferred between the main transfer mechanism and the load lock chamber, and controlling at least oxygen concentration and pressure;

a transferring arm, having a temperature adjusting portion adjusting a temperature of the substrate placed thereon, capable of moving between the heating process chamber and the load lock chamber, transferring the substrate one by one within the integrally connected zone of the heating process chamber and the load lock chamber, and allowing the main transfer mechanism to collect the substrate placed on the temperature adjusting portion of the transferring arm through the opening, and

a gate valve shielding the integrally connected heating process chamber from the load lock chamber.

wherein the heating process chamber comprises:

a supplier supplying an inert gas to the heating process chamber;

a pressure reducing portion reducing a pressure inside the heating chamber;

and

a controller controlling the supplier and the pressure reducing portion so that the oxygen concentration of the heating process chamber decreases at a velocity in the range from around 6000ppm/second to 20000ppm/second.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The apparatus, as set forth in claim 1, ~~further comprising:~~

wherein the pressure reducing portion comprises a first exhausting portion vacuum exhausting the heating process chamber; and

a second exhausting portion normally exhausting the heating process chamber; [[and]]

wherein the apparatus further comprising:

~~a supplier supplying an inert gas to the heating process chamber; and~~

a selecting portion selecting the first exhausting portion or the second exhausting portion and causing the selected portion to operate so that a pressure and an oxygen concentration inside the heating process chamber becomes the same as the pressure and the oxygen concentration inside the load lock chamber.

Claim 3 (Original): The apparatus, as set forth in claim 2,
wherein the first exhausting portion reduces the inner pressure of the heating process chamber to around 1330 Pa or less, and

wherein the second exhausting portion reduces the inner pressure of the heating process chamber to around 100000 Pa or less.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The apparatus, as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

a controller controlling the temperature of the heating process performed for the substrate in the heating process chamber.

Claim 5 (Original): The apparatus, as set forth in claim 4,

wherein the controller is capable of controlling the temperature in the range from 100°C to 800°C.

Claims 6-8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The substrate processing apparatus, as set forth in claim 1,

wherein the transferring arm has a waiting portion in the load lock chamber for temporarily placing the substrate thereon when the heating process is performed one by one for the substrate in the heating process chamber in a changed processing condition.

Claim 10 (Original): The apparatus, as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:
a supplier supplying an active gas to the load lock chamber; and
a sprayer spraying the active gas to a front surface of the substrate in the load lock chamber so as to reform the front surface of the substrate.

Claims 11-21 (Canceled).

Claim 22 (Withdrawn): A method processing a substrate, comprising the steps of
(a) raising a temperature of the substrate to the predetermined temperature at which a heating process is performed for the substrate and decreasing an oxygen concentration in an area of which the substrate is processed at a velocity in a range from around 6000ppm/second to 20000ppm/second; and

(b) performing the heating process for the substrate at the predetermined temperature in the area with a decreased oxygen concentration.

Claim 23 (Withdrawn): The substrate processing method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the step (a) is performed by decreasing the oxygen concentration of the area in which the heating process is performed for the substrate at a velocity of around 10000ppm/second.

Claim 24 (Withdrawn): The method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the step (a) is performed by reducing an inner pressure of the area while an inert gas, a reactive gas, or a liquid vaporous gas is being supplied to the area so as to decrease the oxygen concentration of the area.

Claim 25 (Withdrawn): The method as set forth in claim 22, wherein the step (a) includes the step of: increasing the oxygen concentration of the area.

Claim 26 (Withdrawn): An apparatus for processing a substrate, comprising:
a first processing block having at least a coating process unit coating a processing solution on the substrate;
a heating and cooling unit having a heating process chamber heating the substrate, a load lock chamber integrally connected to the heating process chamber in a predetermined direction and disposed between the heating process chamber and the first processing block and controlling at least oxygen concentration and pressure, and a gate valve shielding the heating process chamber from the load lock chamber; and
a main transfer mechanism for transferring the substrate between the first processing block and the heating and cooling unit;

wherein the load lock chamber has a transferring arm capable of moving in the predetermined direction and transferring the substrate between the heating process chamber and the load lock chamber and performing a cooling process for the substrate, an opening allowing the substrate to be transferred between the transferring arm and the main transfer mechanism, and a shutter allowing the opening to be opened and closed.

Claim 27 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26, further comprising:
a second processing chamber disposed adjacent to the first processing chamber,
having at least two heating and cooling processing units; and

wherein the main transfer mechanism is disposed between the two heating and cooling units, transferring the substrate between the heating process chamber and the load lock chamber, and transferring the substrate between the first processing block and the second processing block.

Claim 28 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26, wherein the heating process chamber comprising:

a first exhausting portion vacuum exhausting the heating process chamber;
a second exhausting portion normally exhausting the heating process chamber; and
a selecting portion adaptively selecting the first exhausting portion or the second exhausting portion and causing the selected-means to operate.

Claim 29 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 28,
wherein the first exhausting portion reduces the inner pressure of the heating process chamber to around 1330 Pa or less, and

wherein the second exhausting portion reduces the inner pressure of the heating process chamber to around 100000 Pa or less.

Claim 30 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26, the heating and cooling unit comprising:

a controller controlling a temperature of the heating process for the substrate in the heating process chamber.

Claim 31 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 30,
wherein the controller is capable of controlling the temperature in the range from 100°C to 800°C.

Claim 32 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26,
wherein the temperature of the heating process in the heating process chamber is in the range from 400°C to 450°C, whereas the temperature of the heating process in the transferring arm is in the range from 15°C to 25°C.

Claim 33 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26,
wherein the transferring arm has a waiting portion in the load lock chamber for temporarily placing the substrate thereon when the heating process for the substrate is performed in the heating process chamber in a changed processing condition.

Claim 34 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26, the heating and cooling unit comprising:

a supplier supplying an inert gas to the heating process chamber.

Claim 35 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26, the heating and cooling unit comprising:

a supplier supplying an active gas to the load lock chamber; and

a sprayer spraying the active gas to a front surface of the substrate in the load lock chamber so as to reform the front surface of the substrate.

Claim 36 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26, the heating and cooling unit comprising:

a supplier supplying an inert gas, a reactive gas, or a liquid vaporous substance to the process chamber; and

a pressure reducing portion reducing an inner pressure of the process chamber.

Claim 37 (Withdrawn): The apparatus as set forth in claim 26, the heating and cooling unit comprising:

a controller controlling the supplier and the pressure reducing portion so that the oxygen concentration of the process chamber decreases at a velocity in the range from around 6000ppm/second to 20000ppm/second.

Claim 38 (Canceled).

Claim 39 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

a supplier supplying an inert gas to the load lock chamber; and

an exhausting portion vacuum exhausting the load lock chamber so that a pressure and an oxygen concentration inside the load lock chamber becomes the same as the pressure and the oxygen concentration inside the heating process chamber.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The substrate processing apparatus as set forth in claim 1,

wherein the heating process chamber comprises an upper wall portion, a lower wall portion and a side wall portion; and

wherein each of the upper wall portion, the lower wall portion and the side wall portion has a temperature controlling mechanism which independently controls a temperature in each of the wall portions.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The substrate processing apparatus as set forth in claim 40, wherein the temperature controlling mechanism comprises a heater and a cooling pipe.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the heating process chamber comprises a plurality of temperature controlling areas; and

wherein each of the plurality of temperature controlling areas comprises a temperature controlling mechanism which independently controls a temperature in each of the temperature controlling areas.

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Claim 43 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as set forth in claim 42, wherein the temperature controlling mechanism comprises a heater and a cooling pipe.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): ~~The apparatus, as set forth in claim 1,~~

An apparatus disposed adjacent to a main transfer mechanism for processing a substrate one by one, comprising:

a heating process chamber in which a heating process is performed one by one for the substrate;

a load lock chamber, integrally connected to the heating process chamber in a predetermined direction, having an opening closable with a shutter allowing the substrate to be transferred between the main transfer mechanism and the load lock chamber, and controlling at least oxygen concentration and pressure

a transferring arm, having a temperature adjusting portion adjusting a temperature of the substrate placed thereon, capable of moving between the heating process chamber and the load lock chamber, transferring the substrate one by one within the integrally connected zone of the heating process chamber and the load lock chamber, and allowing the main transfer mechanism to collect the substrate placed on the temperature adjusting portion of the transferring arm through the opening; and

a gate valve shielding the integrally connected heating process chamber from the load lock chamber;

wherein the heating process chamber comprises:

a heating plate for heating the substrate;

a ~~lid member~~ lid body, capable of being lifted up and down, disposed above the heating plate to cover the heating plate when the ~~lid member~~ lid body is lifted down;

a moving mechanism for raising and lowering the ~~lid member~~ lid body; and

a canopy member disposed opposite to the gate valve of the load lock chamber and provided integrally with the ~~lid member~~ lid body so that the canopy member is placed in a

upper portion of the gate valve when the ~~lid member~~ lid body is lifted up, and placed in a lower portion of the gate valve when the ~~lid member~~ lid body is lowered down.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as set forth in claim 44, further comprising:

a first gas supplier supplying an inert gas to the load lock chamber.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented): The apparatus as set forth in claim 45, wherein the heating process chamber comprises a second gas supplier supplying the inert gas into a zone surrounded by the lid body and the heating plate.